ROSY OUTLOOK FOR BRITISH WOMEN IS WAR RESULT

Mrs. Harriman Finds New and Progressive Forces at Work to Aid Feminine Population, With the Democracy Fostered by Common Cause Against the Enemy Growing in Peace Time---Better Education Demanded and Entrance Into Politics Broadens Sex---Limitation of Armaments Stirs Enthusiasm

THIS is the third of a series of articles concerning the future of British women and their reaction from the war written by Mrs. Borden Harriman, noted American sociologist, now touring Europe studying post-war conditions. Her article next week in The New York Herald Magazine will start a series about women on the Continent.

By MRS. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Special Correspondence to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

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BEFORE leaving New York we were told by an editor just returned from England that active progress over here was in a state of partial collapse—"gone blaa," as he described it.

He had been here during the coal strike and immediately after it, when this whole country was standing aghast at the stupefying prospects. At that time the superficial indications that would tend to support his opinion were more evident than they are now, but, on the other hand, this statement by our editorial friend has served only to throw into high relief the immense activity in every direction that may be found.

It is not a superficial activity. The great forces of progress, working beneath the surface until the catastrophe of the war made them apparent, have again subsided from their spectacular eruption. But that they are immensely active cannot be doubted by any one who probes beneath the surface. Through all classes of people, opinion and standards great changes are at work. There is little noisy evidence of this universal stirring and fermentation of ideas, but it comes to the top at every crisis of political and economic life and it shows itself in a thousand minor details.

The conservatism of England and of English life and thought forms a crust over the top of what is really going on—underneath it the new forces are busily at work.

The change that is most noticeable to the onlooker is the gathering strength of the democratic spirit in the relations between class and class. The Government of England has long been one of the most democratic in the world, but, right alongside of it, the social life of England has remained practically caste ridden—frozen into its form by the conservatism that is the basis of English character. We see everywhere unmistakable evidence of the breaking down of the old time rigidity of the social structure.

The people of England were united for a single objective during the war. High and low, rich and poor—they were one in purpose, affected equally by the agony of failure and the elation of success, bound together by a common hope and by a common fear. They learned, as never before, how trivial are the distinctions of class and how independent of any class distinctions are the personal attributes of courage, intelligence and resolution; and they haven't forgotten it. Class justified itself to class in the common effort, and the old barriers went down.

They were ancient barriers—mortised in centuries of conservatism; but when they fell there arose a new spirit of equality, based on individual merit. In horse show language, the relative value of conformation to performance has been changed.

Formerly it was conformation that counted most—what a man or woman was; now it is performance that counts—what a man or woman does.

Nowhere is this new democracy more marked than it is among the women, and especially among the vast body of those who made up the war organization behind the lines. With them, sisters in effort and in sorrow as they were, it is an enduring and vital force to-day.

Unified by this new element, their work is largely one of preparation for future and greater activities. Women everywhere are consolidating their gains, preparing themselves for the new advances that they must make in the near future.

What is actually taking place is that now that they have the theoretical liberties they are trying to get them practically.

Fighting Unjust Discrimination In Civil Service Appointments

For instance, they are allowed civil service appointments, but so far only those that are considered especially within women's province, whereas the women feel that all civil service appointments should be open to any woman who has the brains and ability to perform the duties involved, and they will make a fight to that end. At present there is much unjust discrimination against their employment in administrative capacities.

Women are now admitted to the judicial bench. Mrs. Fawcett, the eminent suffrage leader, sits as a magistrate in one of the municipal courts. Also women are sitting on juries, and the effect is amazing, as it brings home their responsibilities not only to the intellectual classes but to every woman who is impanelled.

Inevitably in the next ten years all legal procedure will change, as the legal rights of women will have to be adjusted to conform to their political rights.

Of course there is the fact, to which attention was drawn in an earlier article, that in the industrial field women have suffered from the effort to give every available job to ex-service men. Naturally, no one has resented this, but there has been exception taken to the giving of positions to men who never saw service at the front in preference to the women without whose labors in the munition plants the war could never have been carried through.

In the last two months, however, there have been more jobs available to women, showing that conditions are improving.

It augurs well for the next generation that parents of young girls are training them to a profession. The training schools and their waiting lists are full.

Bedford College, the woman's college of the University of London, had before the war an enrolment of about 400 students. To-day it is taxed to its utmost capacity, having 650 students enrolled, and a long waiting list. This is an example of the value now placed on education for the professions.

This college, a pioneer of its kind, was established in 1849, and has grown from small beginnings into an important element in the educational prospects of English women. It comprises a group of great buildings in Regent's Park, surrounded by spacious grounds and gardens, and gives full degrees in arts and science and in the first two examinations for medical degrees. It furnishes well appointed laboratories and libraries and has comfortable living quarters for ninety of its students.

The majority of its graduates become teachers, and its faculty is of the general opinion that teaching is still the best profession open to women in this country.

Among the recently inaugurated services open to women is the women's police force of the city of London—the women constables that American visitors may see on duty to-day in most of the crowded London streets.

There are 100 of these feminine guardians of the public welfare, with twelve officers, and at their headquarters at Scotland Yard we met their chief, Mrs. Stanley, a charming and cultivated woman. She described their duties as being primarily connected with women and children and their various functions as tending to the prevention rather than to the detection of crime.

In 1914 special conditions arising out of the war led to the organization by private enterprise, but with the approval of the authorities, of women patrols. Their chief fields of usefulness lay in the supervision of women and girls in and around the army centres and training camps and in looking out for the distracted refugees from Belgium as they arrived in England.

Later on each war organization of women had its own detachment of women patrols, who functioned along the lines of a military police—all working under the central government authorities.

Power of New Women Patrols Limited to Cooperative Work

After the war various organizations brought forward their influence to have a woman's police force incorporated permanently in the city administration, and Sir Neville Macready, the present head of the London police force, obtained the sanction of the Home Office for the present force of women patrols. They take the same preliminary training as the men, but they do not stand on equal terms with them as yet. They are not regularly sworn in to the police force, nor can they make arrests; they act, rather, as an auxiliary force and work in cooperation with the many welfare organizations in reference to the rescuing and care of women and children.

They are doing a splendid work in that line and have already brilliantly justified their existence as a factor in municipal administration.

"Baby Week" here has but just gone by, bringing vividly to mind that the cause of infant welfare is one of the vital causes of the world. It has been pointed out that up to now the history of the world has shown very little organized care for the welfare of the very young. Society, it is true, has built up the system of individual homes, monogamous in some countries, and polygamous in others, in which the family unit becomes the shelter for the children, but apart from this the organization of the business has hardly progressed.

The babies have been left to the individual care of their mothers, and the mothers have been isolated one from another by the family system itself. Medical science and research have only recently begun to assist that very inadequate thing, maternal instinct, and the public conscience has only recently become aware of its common duty toward the young.

Within the last century, however, things have been changing, and with the increasing political and civic power of women they will change still more.

It is no disparagement to men to say this; it is but the normal course of events; and though, without doubt, many other factors have contributed to it, it is quite impossible to deny that medical research, educational improvement and domestic hygiene have advanced side by side with the freedom of women.

And now, with political enfranchisement, legislation will move in the same direction. Equal guardianship, widows' pensions, maternity insurance, these and the other measures designed for infant protection will pass into law; housing and education will improve, and that worst enemy of child life, adult dissipation, will be treated with the severity it deserves.

And then perhaps Baby Weeks will no longer be needed.

Twice recently Lady Astor has brought pressure to bear on the Home Secretary to induce him to appoint a woman as official representative to the Geneva conference on the traffic in women and children. Denmark has appointed a woman as full voting delegate, and France has sent a woman as alternate delegate, but apparently nothing will persuade Mr. Shortt to give way. He will not even state what the real objection of the British Government to a woman representative is, nor what their policy is to be, and such an attitude on such a subject is a serious thing for women.

Lady Astor pointed out that those who have dealt specially with this subject here in England have never been consulted, and a man has been sent who knows practically nothing about it. Mr. Shortt tried to protect himself from further awkward questions by holding up the presence of one woman member of the National Vigilance Association as adviser of Great Britain's representative as a proof of the Government's broadmindedness where women are concerned. But this is not an official appointment, and the Government has no responsibility for it.

The conference is at this moment in session, and it is considering whether it shall urge the League of Nations to appoint a permanent international committee to advise the council of the league on all matters dealing with white slave traffic. The conference has before it a heavy task, and its decisions will be eagerly awaited by all women's societies throughout the world.

In this country a large number of them have already banded together, through the machinery of Lady Astor's consultative committee, to urge upon the conference the necessity of safeguarding women from this infamous traffic.

English factory workers at fire drill. In circle is Lady Gladstone, enthusiastic advocate of the limitation of armaments, a topic paramount in British women's minds.

In panel—Lady Astor, M. P., who has done much for English women. In oval—Mrs. Fawcett, first woman Judge.

Typical London patrol woman. At right is Sir Neville Macready, police head, who secured the authorization for the auxiliary force.

Surely the near future presages strenuous times for the women of England. They are preparing to take their place in the professions, and they will have a hand in the setting of the pattern that will come out of the next ten years.

In the minds of many to-day, however, the subject that holds first place, because it is the most momentous, is disarmament. Members of all classes will tell you that there is nothing they would not do or sacrifice to make sure that there will never be another devastating war.

Under a hedge on the outskirts of a village in Surrey a little old woman sat one warm evening last week and told tales of the merrie England of her youth. She was the last of her race—her son and grandsons all belonging to the army of "The Glorious Dead."

"There is nothing left for me to pray for," she concluded, "but England—except to ask for more love in the hearts of us all. We've talked of Christ, but we haven't followed Him—they've preached the spirit of love in the churches, but haven't loved their neighbor. I've seen a lot in my time, and knowin' all I do now, I'm sure there is nothin' in fightin'—and never was. It's like the beasts. If I was young and knew how to do it I'd give my life to be rid of fightin' machines forever." She parted from us and went on her way toward the sunset glow, leaving behind her much food for thought.

In London on these hot days women may be found who obviously would have been at Goodwood or already flown to the moors or the seashore—women giving voluntary service to associations working for world peace.

In a small room in the League of Nations Union a beautiful woman, simply but smartly dressed, is busy every morning at her desk. She is Lady Gladstone, the daughter-in-law of the great Prime Minister.

"International cooperation is the important thing," she said; "patriotism of humanity as against the patriotism of nationality. I feel that there is nothing too precious to sacrifice to bring about an agreement among the nations for limitation of armaments."

This, put in another way, is but the sentiment expressed by that old woman encountered by chance beside a Surrey hedge.

Truly, a sentiment for disarmament is running through the whole structure of society. May it bear fruit, and may the women of the world not cease from their labors until it does.

At the risk of censure for presenting too rosy a view of the situation, or of incurring the name of propagandist, we can only read the book as it lies open before us. Any one with the usual single portion of optimism must be filled with enthusiasm at the objectives already gained by Englishwomen and at the spirit that is moving them toward future advances.

There would be much to deprecate were we writing of the muddling of the Irish question, the disgraceful slums, the stagnation in relation to housing and in the handling of many of the perplexing problems of to-day, but we have been discussing woman's next step in England—and in it we find little to discourage and much that makes for hopefulness.

From $7 a Week to $12,000 a Year

THE youngest and poorest paid stock girl and all the abler and higher salaried women of a big shop have heard the story of Myrtle McCleary. It is a star in the sky of their own hopes. Mrs. McCleary began her work in the stores at $7 a week. She now earns $12,000 a year. She conducts a business of $1,500,000 a year. Every year she sails to the Old World and wanders in search of Oriental objects of art for American consumption. For six months of each year she goes bargain hunting in China, Japan and India. She takes with her on these journeys letters of credit for $200,000 to $400,000 to pay for the rare bits of jade, the vases that are worth far more than their weight in gold, and the ancient embroideries, the product of the brains of dead masters of drawing and color. She is the woman who has solved many of the mysteries of the East.

This woman did not begin her business career with the ambition which she has achieved. The sole aim and single purpose of the young widow was to support and educate her little son. To all her world save herself he seemed a heavy liability. "It costs so much to bring up a boy and send him through school, even if he lives," sang the sympathy chorus of neighbors.

Mrs. McCleary lifted her head. It is a habit of hers. A good habit because its spiritual correspondence is resolve. She would support that little seven-year-old man of hers. She would educate him adequately, train him fully for the life fray. She was sure she would for she would use the final ounce of her energy for the task.

Life has justified her faith and her high resolve. She did support the little liability whom she lovingly regarded as an asset. She sent him to and through college. She has seen him established as a first ranking chemist in an Eastern city. From which she argues that every woman must have an important incentive to succeed.

"The greatest incentive is to have to work," she says.

The "how" of Mrs. McCleary's success story clings, burrlike, to the memory. It stirs one to laughter at the old myth of luck and to faith in the reality of applied pluck.

The young widow, with her little world of obligation pressing heavily upon her, asked for work at the shop in question. The superintendent inquired about her previous experience. She had none save that to eke out the income at home she had done some embroidery, back in Urbana, Ill. She had embroidered table pieces and towels for her friends and had taken up the work of embroiderer for an embroidery house in Fifth avenue, but after a month's illness, broke off this connection.

There was a vacancy in the Japanese goods in the basement. She took her place behind the counter at $7 a week.

Seven dollars a week would not maintain the little lad at home and provide her own simple necessities. Something else had to be done. The something was what she could best do. She summoned her old and tested accomplishment, embroidery. She worked from 8 to 6 o'clock in the basement of the department store and embroidered table and bed linen at night.

"Often I sat up until 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning embroidering," she said. "I earned more at the embroidery than in the store. I embroidered a bedspread for a friend. It was in cross stitch and violets. She paid me $100."

But human energy and eyesight have their limits. Myrtle McCleary saw that the permanent upward way was by means of the little Japanese booth in the basement. She thought and thought about the Japanese goods.

She longed for a stock different than that of any other Japanese goods counter she had seen. One day she arranged some brilliantly colored stuff on the counter as a background for the fans and vases and was rebuked for it. The buyer said no one else had ever introduced colored fabrics as a background. He didn't like it. She sighed and folded the beautiful colored silk and placed it back on the shelf.

She dared to make suggestions for a trifling rearrangement of the stock. She learned that she was "fussy." But she was not discouraged. She might not please the buyer but she always pleased the customer, provided the shop had the desired article in stock. If they did not she swiftly made a memoranda of the lack and earnestly advised the purchase of it.

The successive male buyers classed Mrs. Myrtle McCleary as a pestiferous disturber of the old order. But in his office, far above the basement, the superintendent noted the sum of her daily sales slips. By reason of this her salary grew from $7 to $8 and $10 and $12 a week. She was earning $12 a week when the superintendent appointed her assistant buyer. She was not permitted to accompany the lordly male buyer about town for souvenirs of the Flowery Kingdom. But to her was vouchsafed the privilege of receiving, assorting and arranging the stock of his purchase. At which she rejoiced, for innovations in decorations would now be tolerated at the Japanese counter. Hers was the joy of massing colors and pyramiding wares in a new and effective way. The booth took on a new and vital beauty. Women intent upon the purchase of kitchen towels paused to admire the Oriental ware so skilfully massed, and buy a small and inexpensive vase for the "front room."

For nine years Myrtle McCleary worked and learned in the basement. The last of these years a new building was rearing its overtopping frame beside the old store. Mrs. McCleary called at the owner's office and waited for the audience which any employee who asks may have.

"I called to suggest that the Oriental department be moved upstairs," she said.

"Why, Mrs. McCleary?"

"Because the kind of person who will buy good Oriental things won't come to the basement to shop."

It was a cogent argument, the head of the house decided, and after a week the Japanese goods were moved up stairs to the third floor and there remained. For her long and excellent basement record, her initiative, her vision in looking higher, she was made head of the department. Which means that she bought the goods and was responsible for their sales.

The first step on the road of improvement was an enlargement of the stock to include the products of other Asiatic countries. Mrs. McCleary proposed that the Oriental goods should embrace those not only of Japan but of China and India. She was sent to the aged countries to gather the cream of their products. On the first trip she accompanied the store's "round the world buyer," who counselled her on shipboard, clasped her hand at Yokohama, invoked for her the "best of luck in the world" and continued his own journey of circumnavigation of the globe.

On her first trip as a buyer, which was her first trip to Asia, she established a record. The dark skinned folk discovered that she "made one price and stuck to it."

She has arranged the Oriental objects department in the form of a house with three rooms. Each room is arranged as a handsome room would be appointed in Tokio or Pekin or Ceylon. Many of the objects therein she bought in Eastern homes. If a client wishes to study the objects of art, folding doors or rare draperies leave him alone with the attendant to discuss them. It was in the Chinese room that Mrs. McCleary made her largest sale, that of a piece of jade of flawless green. Its price was $22,000. It enriches a private collection whose owner will bequeath it to a public museum of art.

Do you suppose that this woman in middle life has achieved her ambition? She has achieved successive ambitions, but in her active mind new ones are born. Two now accompany her days and march persistently through her nights.

"I want to reach $100,000 sales in one day," she says. "We have nearly reached it but not quite. And I want to get into Tibet. I want to visit and buy things in the Forbidden City. There's a temple there in which the collection is so precious that the workmen who arranged it were buried alive in its walls. I want to see it."